

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

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R 221235Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2606
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS

S E C R E T KHARTOUM 2784

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MASS SU, UK
SUBJECT: SUDAN INTEREST IN RED SEA SECURITY

REF: (A) KHARTOUM 2717 (NOTAL) (B) KHARTOUM 2734

1. AT HIS REQUEST BRITISH CHARGE RONALD NEWMAN CALLED ON ME SEPTEMBER 21. HE SHOWED ME CABLE FROM FOREIGN OFFICE IN LONDON WHICH DISCUSSED MEETING EXPECTED TO TAKE PLACE AROUND SEPTEMBER 29 BETWEEN MANSOUR KHALID AND FOREIGN SECRETARY. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE KHALID PRESENTLY IN US (REF A), IN CONNECTION WITH ARAB-AMERICAN CONFERENCE AT LIBRARY OF CONGRESS. DURING HIS RETURN TO KHARTOUM HE WILL BE STOPPING IN LONDON WHERE HE WILL DISCUSS SUCH CURRENT BILATERAL QUESTIONS AS STATUS IN UK OF SADIQ AL-MAHDI AND SUDANESE ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING RELEASE OF BRITISH HOSTAGES FROM ERITREAN REBELS.

2. IN ADDITION, HOWEVER, KHALID WILL WANT TO TALK ABOUT SECURITY IN RED SEA, ACCORDING TO SUDANESE AMBASSADOR IN LONDON WHO HAS DISCUSSED KHALID VISIT
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WITH BRITISH OFFICIALS. MOREOVER, SUDANESE AMBASSADOR

REFERRED TO DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT WHICH HAVE BEEN HELD PREVIOUSLY AMONG SUDAN, EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA AND US RPT US. NEWMAN WAS INSTRUCTED TO INQUIRE REGARDING OUR INVOLVEMENT IN SUCH DISCUSSIONS.

3. I TOLD HIM THAT I WAS TOTALLY UNAWARE OF ANY SUCH DISCUSSIONS INVOLVING UE AND I THOUGHT IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT ANY HAD TAKEN PLACE. EXPLAINING THAT IT WAS CONCEIVABLE THAT RED SEA SECURITY HAD BEEN DISCUSSED BILATERALLY WITH EGYPT OR SAUDI ARABIA, ALTHOUGH I DOUBTED THAT THIS WAS SO, I NOTED THAT WE HAD NOT HELD ANY CONSULTATIONS AT ALL WITH GOS ON SUBJECT. WE AGREED THAT SUDANESE AMBASSADOR IN LONDON MAY SIMPLY HAVE BEEN CONFUSED AND HAD MISINTERPRETED HIS INSTRUCTIONS. WE THOUGHT THAT MOST LIKELY EXPLANATION WAS THAT SUDAN/EGYPT/SAUDI DISCUSSIONS DAY HAVE INCLUDED CONSIDERATION OF SOME FUTURE REQUEST FOR US EQUIPMENT OR ASSISTANCE.

4. DURING DISCUSSION NEWMAN SAID THAT GOS HAS INQUIRED ABOUT BUYING FAST PATROL BOATS FROM FRANCE AND THAT SOME SUDANESE NAVAL OFFICERS HAVE BEEN INVITED TO ATTEND A NAVAL REVIEW IN TOULON. (CF. REF B) HE ALSO INDICATED THAT GOS HAS RAISED INFORMALLY WITH BRITISH POSSIBILITY OF HMG PROVIDING ASSISTANCE IN NAVAL AREA.

5. COMMENT: SUDAN'S NAVY IS VIRTUALLY NON-EXISTENT, BUT IT POSSIBLE THAT AS PART OF RECENT EFFORTS TO IMPROVE SECURITY CAPABILITIESGOS IS CONSIDERING IMPROVING ITS NAVAL FORCES. IT APPEARS THAT GOS HAS ALREADY INITIATED DISCUSSIONS WITH FRENCH AND BRITISH. POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT KHALID MAY RAISE SUBJECT IN WASHINGTON, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE HAD NO ADVANCE INDICATION OF THIS FROM OFFICIALS HERE. ALSO POSSIBLE THAT BRITISH EITHER IN LONDON OR WASHINGTON MAY QUERY US RE ANY US INVOLVEMENT IN REGIONAL DISCUSSIONS OF RED SEA SECURITY. I TOLD NEWMAN, HOWEVER, THAT I DID NOT THINK THIS WOULD BE NECESSARY. BOGOSIAN

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